

The Nevada Test Site as a Lunar Analog Test Area

The Nevada Test Site (NTS) is a large (1,350 square miles) secure site currently operated by National Security Technologies, LLC (NSTec), for the U.S. Department of Energy and was established in 1951 to provide a venue for testing nuclear weapons. Three areas with a variety of elevation and geological parameters were used for testing, but the largest number of tests was in Yucca Flat. The Yucca Flat area is approximately 5 miles wide and 20 miles long and approximately 460 subsidence craters resulted from testing in this area. The Sedan crater displaced approximately 12 million tons of earth and is the largest of these craters at 1,280 feet across and 320 feet deep. The profiles of Sedan and the other craters offer a wide variety of shapes and depths that are ideally suited for lunar analog testing.